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OO RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH
DE RUEHOK #0268 3400450

ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0958

INFO RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 8095

RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 0209

RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA PRIORITY 2316

RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 0198

RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY 0221

RHOVQHS/COMSEVENTHFLT PRIORITY

RUYNJDK/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RHHMHMAH/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY

RUENAAA/SECNAV WASHDC PRIORITY

RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HQ USPACOM PRIORITY

RHHMUND/COMMARFORPAC CAMP H M SMITH HI PRIORITY

UNCLAS OSAKA KOBE 000268

SIPDIS

USFJ FOR J00, J01, J05, AND J06
OSD/J FOR JOHN GEIS AND SUZANNE BASALLA

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: MARR PGOV ASEC JA

SUBJECT: HIROSHIMA MAYOR ON IWAKUNI CASE: QDOOR OPEN TO
USFJ PERSONNEL

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba telephoned Consul General on December 5 to discuss the October 14 incident involving Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Iwakuni personnel and a woman in nearby Hiroshima City, now that the criminal investigation has been dropped by Japanese prosecutors. He added a half-apology for his strongly-worded letter to the Ambassador over the incident. Akiba also reiterated his city's openness toward Americans, including military personnel from Iwakuni. The mayor asked that the USG keep him abreast of developments in the military justice system's case against the defendants. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) CG Russel attempted to contact Mayor Akiba on October 19 after news of the October 14 alleged sexual assault involving four MCAS Iwakuni personnel and a 19-year old woman in Naka-ku, Hiroshima surfaced in the Japanese media. CG sought to convey to the mayor the seriousness with which the USG was viewing this incident, that the U.S. holds its military personnel to the highest disciplinary standards, and that we would cooperate with Japanese authorities to determine the bona fides of the case. Akiba was out of the country and upon his return to Japan, his staff cited illness as a reason the mayor could not be reached.

¶3. (SBU) On October 22, Akiba sent Ambassador Schieffer a strongly-worded letter demanding information about the case, care for the alleged victim, and a review of USFJ military discipline and the U.S.-Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).

¶4. (SBU) On November 6, Hiroshima Police ended their investigation of the four defendants and declined to press charges, releasing them to the U.S. military justice system. On December 5, Akiba telephoned CG to acknowledge that there had been no backlash against the U.S. military in Hiroshima over the case, and that public concerns about safety in Naka-ku had been

allayed -- as close to an apology for his letter as we can expect. He assured CG that Americans -- including the Marines in Iwakuni -- were still welcome in his city.

¶5. (SBU) Accepting his invitation for Americans to continue to enjoy Hiroshima's hospitality, the CG also emphasized that the USG and USFJ were committed to maintaining the highest standards of discipline and that the case was still under careful consideration by the U.S. military authorities. Mayor Akiba asked to be apprised of any significant developments in their case.

RUSSEL